

**SECRET**  
SECURITY INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR: DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Immigration of Aleksei KURGWEL

It is recommended that permanent residency in the United States be granted to Aleksei KURGWEL, an Estonian national and a former captain of the Estonian army, under the terms of Section 8 of Public Law 110 of 1949. This recommendation is based on the following facts:

1. Captain KURGWEL has been employed by the CIA in Germany since September 1951, and has rendered outstanding service to this Agency through his participation in contemplated top secret missions for the penetration of the Baltic States (USSR). He has performed these duties competently, diligently, and patiently.
2. Captain KURGWEL's services are considered essential for the future training and dispatching of Estonian agents into the Estonian SSR, and for future training of Baltic agents for unconventional warfare. These services are to be performed in the United States.
3. Because of Captain KURGWEL's knowledge of some CIA top secret operational plans into the Estonian SSR, it is essential to our security that he be removed from Europe.
4. Captain Aleksei KURGWEL's U.S. immigration visa was suspended in July 1951 by the Board of Special Inquiry in Munich under Sections 13 and 10 of Public Law 744 because of his services in German I. S. during World War II from June 1941 to May 1945. (See Background and Biography points 10 and 13-c.)
5. Inasmuch as Captain KURGWEL has been declared inadmissible to the United States under the Displaced Persons Act by a Board of Special Inquiry of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, his immigration is possible only under Section 8 of Public Law 110 of 1949.

Enclosures:

- A. Justification
- B. Background and Biography

Acting Chief, SR Division

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
SOURCE/METHOD/EXEMPTION 3B **SECRET**  
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT  
DATE 2006

ENCLOSURE A

**SECRET**  
SECURITY INFORMATION

Justification for Action

1. Captain KURGWEL was employed by CIA in September 1951 as the principal Estonian agent trainer for OSO-OPC operations. He is considered by other Estonians and his case officer as one of the best Estonian intelligence officers in matters of recruitment, assessment, training, and dispatch of agents. Since he has had 23 years of experience in intelligence work it would be a time-consuming and financially a costly process to train and educate an American officer of similar qualifications for agent operations into the Estonian SSR.

2. Since September 1951 Captain KURGWEL has been working efficiently and diligently with the CIA in Germany by direct participation in the planning of missions for the penetration of the Estonian SSR. His immigration into the United States is essential for the implementation of the training of Estonian agents in the United States.

3. Because of Captain KURGWEL's direct participation in the spotting, interrogation, and assessment of prospective CIA agents, and because of the fact that he is well known to European services, it is advisable that he be removed from Europe for security reasons. Inasmuch as his services can be most advantageously used in the United States, it is desired to remove him to the United States.

4. Although no firm commitments have been made that Captain KURGWEL would be permitted to immigrate into the United States for services rendered to the United States Government he is under the firm conviction that this was at least an implied part of the bargain. Captain Alexander KURGWEL's U.S. immigration visa was suspended in July 1951 by the Board of Special Inquiry in Munich under Section 13 and 10 of Public Law 744 because of his services in German armed forces and with German I. S. during World War II from June 1941 to May 1945. (See Background and Biography points 10 and 13-c.)

5. Captain KURGWEL and his family were declared inadmissible to the United States under Section 80 and 13 of the Displaced Persons Act of June 25, 1948, as amended, by a Board of Special Inquiry of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, convened at Wunstorf, Germany, 31 July 1951. The case was appealed and at a second Board of Special Inquiry - convened in Munich, 7 September 1951 - Captain KURGWEL's family was granted permission to immigrate to the United States but KURGWEL's own status remained unchanged. Although KURGWEL was advised orally by the Immigration and Naturalization Service that he could apply for the regular Estonian quota in a years' time, the waiting period for the regular quota is too long to permit KURGWEL to be utilized operationally in the United States by 1 January 1953. Consequently, application of Section 8 Public Law 110 is the only method by which he can immigrate to the United States in time to be operationally useful to CIA.

**SECRET**  
SECURITY INFORMATION

ENCLOSURE B

**SECRET**

Background and Biography

1. Captain KURGVEL is an Estonian General Staff officer with twenty-three years of experience in intelligence work. Much of his experience has been in gathering intelligence on the USSR.

2. He has had experience in compiling and analyzing information, intelligence liaison, intelligence and CE interrogations, radio training and management, recruitment and assessment of Estonian, Latvian and Russian agents, and in the training of agents for dispatch into Estonia and the USSR. During World War II he trained and dispatched nineteen agent teams into Soviet occupied territory.

3. He has an excellent area knowledge of Finland, Estonia and Latvia, and speaks, reads and writes fluent Estonian, Russian, German, fair English, and some French and Finnish.

4. He is dedicated to the defeat of Communism and the liberation of Estonia at the price of any necessary personal sacrifice, and believes that cooperation with the United States offers the best, if not the only, means of accomplishing this end.

5. He is capable of recruiting and training agents of non-Estonian nationality and would be willing to do so in order to be working towards the defeat of Communism.

6. Although he worked with the German Army Intelligence during World War II, he was opposed to the policy of the German politicians. He is somewhat prejudiced against the British because of their lack of assistance to the Estonian intelligence officers who had furnished information to the British prior to the war, and because of their lack of activity against the Soviet Union following World War II.

7. He is extremely temperate in his habits, smoking little and drinking only on social occasions.

8. He is well-above average in intelligence, and has considerable initiative in fields with which he is familiar. He is systematic and sensible, hard working, conscientious and energetic. Since his association with the CIA, he has, on his own initiative, studied radio techniques, prepared lectures for training, and compiled information on Estonia from overt sources in an elaborate card file. This work has occupied him from ten to twelve hours per day seven days per week. His long waiting period to become active in agent training and dispatch would probably have led to his quitting long ago if it were not for his patience and fatalistic belief that more time is spent waiting than acting.

9. Because of his strong sense of honor, he does not present a security problem. He would pursue a course contrary to his higher authorities only with their full knowledge, unless he considers that course outside the limits of his commitments. However if the commitments between the United States Government and KURGVEL are stated firmly and specifically, KURGVEL can be

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

CONFIDENTIAL

expected to carry out his part strictly in accordance with the agreements made.

UNCLASSIFIED

10. Captain KURGVEL was forced to escape from Estonia in 1940 after he refused to work for the Soviet Army Intelligence against the Western powers. However he refused to become a German citizen or to abandon the Estonian national interests even when working through and with the German Army Intelligence. He never hid his Estonian patriotism from his German superiors, and openly defended his course of action at the German Army Intelligence Headquarters.

11. Captain KURGVEL has continued to look for an opportunity to interest the Western allies in his anti-Soviet activity throughout his post-war stay in Germany. His first attempt to contact the Americans before the end of the war failed and he was captured by the British, who first imprisoned him, and then contacted him for intelligence work. Captain KURGVEL broke this contact himself after a half year of inactivity.

12. Aside from efforts to contact American Intelligence through Colonel W.E. SHIFF, United States, Military Attache in Baghdad in 1949, Captain KURGVEL was not connected with any other intelligence agencies, except the British for whom he collected information on Estonia from the debriefing of PW's for a few months in 1950.

13. Biographical Statement:

a. Captain Aleksel KURGVEL was born in Kuressaare, Saaremaa Estonia on 13 September 1904. As Estonia was then occupied he was a Russian citizen until the declaration of Estonian independence in 1920, when he became an Estonian citizen. As an Estonian citizen in Germany he has the following identity papers:

- (1) Deutsches Personal Ausweis AQ 111053, issued in Ventorf
- (2) Temporary Estonian passport issued in London in 1946, extended in 1950.
- (3) Estonian Internal Identity papers, issued in Narva in 1926/27
- (4) Estonian Military Identity papers No. 375, issued in Tallinn in June 1937.

b. Education

1911-1912 private school in Kuressaare  
1912-1915 Ministeriumi Kool (public grammar school) in Kuressaare  
1915-1923 Gümnaasium in Kuressaare  
1923-1926 Military School in Tallinn - Graduated as lieutenant in Technical Troops with radio speciality  
1929-1932 Military Academy, Tallinn  
1943-1944 Political-Economic Division, University of Tartu

**SECRET**

SECRET

c. Employment

Feb.-May 1926 radio operator, signal battalion, Tallinn  
June-Aug. 1926 staff of 2nd Infantry Division, Tartu  
October 1926-  
April-May 1929 staff of 1st Infantry Division, Narva, in charge  
of signal unit  
1933-Jan. 1934 assistant to Chief, Operational Division Staff  
d 1, Infantry Division, Rakvere  
Jan. 34-July 1940 2nd Division General Staff, first as officer  
on call, later as Director Subdivision "A".  
Removed 3 July 1940 on order of Russians.  
1 Sept. 1940-June 1941 Scientific co-worker, National Scientific  
Division, I.G. Farben, Berlin; compiled information  
on Russian industry from overt sources.  
June-Sept 1941 in Finland as Estonian Officer attached to HQ,  
Finland and Finnish General Staff  
Sept. 41-Aug. 1944 with Aufklarungskommando 102 and Abwehrstelle  
I in Tallinn  
Aug.-Oct. 1944 with liaison officer responsible to Commander-in-Chief  
of the German Army Division "Narva" and Commander-  
in-Chief of Army Corps operating in Southern Estonia  
Oct. 44-May 1945 Frontaufklarungs Kommando 166 (K)  
May 45-Aug 1946 Internment by British  
Aug 46-Spring 1947 Unemployed  
16 Sept 47-20 Oct. 1948 interpreter and director camp offices,  
DP Camp Kungla, Stolzenau/Weeser  
Oct 48-15 Sept 1949 office director and deputy camp director,  
DP Camp Esser, Lingen/EMS  
27 Oct 49-30 Sept 1951 clerk for 502 Iro Documentation Center,  
Wentorf  
Sept. 51-present DTULAIN employment

d. Military record

commissioned 2nd lieutenant 1926  
commissioned 1st lieutenant February 1929  
commissioned Captain 24 February 1934  
(For further details see employment record)

e. Family Status

- (1) Mother: Maria KURGVEL nee TOOMPUU, born 29/7/1868 in Estonia,  
died in 1945, nationality Estonian, occupation housewife.
- (2) Sister: Kaenis KURGVEL, born 14 December 1899 in Kuressaare  
now living at Loherilagen 3, Hagersten Sweden, c/o EINMANN,  
nationality Estonian, employed by insurance company in  
Stockholm.

Nadeshda (Nadia) KURGVEL, married to Herman MARIPUU, born  
2 March 1909 in Kuressaare, now living at Bergagatan 32,  
Enkoping, Sweden, employed as housewife and parttime school  
teacher in local Estonian school, nationality Estonian.

SECRET

**SECRET**

Olga KURGVEL, born 1898 in Kuressaare, remained with mother in Kuressaare in October 1944. She had been secretary for the school affairs division of the district administration of Kuressaare. Present location not known.

Sinaida KURGVEL, born 1902 in Kuressaare, died while trying to escape from Kuressaare in October 1944.

Elisaveta KURGVEL, born 1906 in Kuressaare, died while trying to escape from Kuressaare in October 1944. Married to KEREMAN.

Father: Johann KURGVEL, born Estonia 14/2/1871, died 1926, nationality Estonian, occupation baker and gardener.

Wife: SALME KURGVEL, nee EPLER, born 12 January 1909 in Narva Estonia, married on 25 October 1928 in Narva Estonia, emigrated to U.S. on 21 January 1952 under E.C. number 271-072, has filed application for citizenship as far as is known; is now working as practical nurse in the Hospital of the Holy Family, Dean & Hoyt Streets, Brooklyn, N.Y., and living at the following address: c/o MARKASE, 164-03 89 Ave., Jamaica 32, L.I., N.Y.

Mother-in-law: Ida EPLER, nee LIHLIK, housewife, remained in Tartu area after Second Soviet Occupation in 1944, present location unknown.

Father-in-law: Karl EPLER, merchant in Narva, remained in Tartu after Second Soviet Occupation in 1944, present location unknown.

Sons: Jean KURGVEL, born 23 January 1931 in Tallinn, Estonian nationality, emigrated to U.S. in September 1950 after receiving scholarship to Clemson Agricultural College, South Carolina, from the World Association of Students. Emigrated under E.C. number 4 J 172 260.

Rein KURGVEL, born May 1939 in Tallinn, emigrated to U.S. with Salme KURGVEL on 21 January 1952.

**SECRET**